A very warm welcome to everyone, especially our seventeen new foundation families and the families of older students who are new to our school. We also welcome many EEP families as we now have two rooms catering for 35 EEP students. I hope you all enjoy being part of the Dandy Valley community.

We also welcome new staff to Dandy Valley. We have one new ES member, Louise in room 23 and have 4 new teachers, Tom in room 30, Romy in room 31, Gemma in room 12 and Letty in room 14. We welcome you one and all to the very best school in the world!

Our school is lucky enough to have a vibrant and caring parent group called ‘MyTime’, it is run by Lynne Wood mother of Corey. I recommend it to all families new and old. The details of meetings, which are to be held on Tuesday mornings this year, are in this newsletter.

Just a few housekeeping reminders for you all;

**Sick Students:** We really appreciate parents and carers keeping sick children home from school. When a child comes to school sick we will call you to ask you to pick them up, so it is simpler to just keep them at home in the first place. We cannot have the risk of cross infection. Sick students make their friends sick and also the staff. Last year our budget for staff replacement due to illness was close to $300,000. Every cent of that money could have been spent on student resources, I cannot emphasise enough how important keeping sick children at home is.

**Sun Smart:** We are a sun-smart school and all students need a named hat to wear at lunch time and recess during terms 1 & 4. The school supplies anti-cancer council sunscreen to all students but if your child has specific sunscreen requirements can you please send in named sunscreen for your child to use.

**School Supplies:** Some families are yet to send in school supplies for their child’s use at school. I apologise that quite a few students did not receive their list at the end of last year, but I believe everyone should now have their list, so can you please send in the required items as soon as possible?

Thank you to all families for patience and understanding regarding the changes to bus times and pick up points. It is always a difficult time for families when we are given new pick up and drop off times each year but this year was worse than usual because the Education Department changed the rules for buses entering residential courts. Because buses are no longer allowed to do this many families have found themselves walking to meet the bus at street corners. I want to highlight the hard work and patience Judy brings to the job of co-ordinating our buses, she always does her best to advocate for parents needs with the bus companies and student transport, but every year the job gets harder as rules change and families find the service they were used to has changed.

Finally, our school prides itself on being open and pro-active when problems occur. Please do not allow yourself to be upset by any situation, pick up the phone and Judy, Michael or I will sort out your query hopefully before it becomes a really big problem. If we are not immediately available we will call you back as quick as we can.

Looking forward to seeing you all at our SSG evening coming up on Wednesday Feb.17th.

**Parking:** at pick up and drop off time:- Please leave the ‘Disabled Parking’ for people with children in wheelchairs

Cheers Sue
A very big thank you to all our families for the smooth start to the new school year and especially for the tolerance and understanding shown as our school bus runs settle in. As we have mentioned in the past, for our students to continue to enjoy the wonderful, free service that they do, requires changes to the bus runs every year as students leave the school and new students enrol. This obviously impacts on pick-up and drop-off times and while we appreciate this may inconvenience families there is very little we can do. Times as advised at the end of 2015 were obviously estimates only but accurate run times should become clear in the next weeks as our new preps start accessing the buses.

To avoid unnecessary delays, families should ring the bus in the mornings if a student is not travelling that day. If you do not have a copy of the bus phone numbers please contact your class teacher.

Any queries regarding bus transport should be directed to the school, not the Bus operators. Further information can be obtained from DET Student Transport Branch:

student.transport@edumail.vic.gov.au

Thank you!!
FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

Thank you to families who completed and posted the surveys back to Anoo Bhopti. The survey packs regarding family quality of life were sent to some families in December last year. The survey is still open, so if you can spare 10 minutes, please fill out the forms and return via post (postage paid) in the envelope provided.

Thank you for your participation

CAMPS SPORT AND EXCURSION FUND FOR 2016 (CSEF)

Dear Parents/Carers

If you currently hold a Centrelink pensioner concession or Health care card you may be eligible for a payment from the state government called Camps Sport and Excursion Fund (CSEF).

You might like to have a look at the web site for more information:

Please complete the attached form included in this newsletter and return to the school office as soon as possible for processing.

Kind Regards
Admin Team
CSEF ELIGIBILITY

Below is the criteria used to determine a student’s eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

Criteria 1 - Eligibility
To be eligible* for the fund, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:
- on the first day of Term one, or;
- on the first day of Term two;
  a) Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder, OR
  b) Be a temporary foster parent, and;
  c) Submit an application to the school by the due date.

* A special consideration eligibility category also exists. For more information, see: www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria
School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and 17 years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and 18 years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooled, or TAFE.

Eligibility Date
For concession card holders CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian’s concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink on the first day of either term one (27 January 2016) or term two (11 April 2016).

Closing Date
Parents are encouraged to lodge the application form by 29 February 2016, so that payments can be made from March 2016. However schools can accept parent applications up until 03 June 2016.

PAYMENT AMOUNTS

CSEF payment amount
The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.
- Primary school student rate: $125 per year.
- Secondary school student rate: $225 per year.

The CSEF is paid directly to your child’s school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student’s date of birth. For more information, see: www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Secondary schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents so please register your interest at the school.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM

1. Complete the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DETAILS section.
   Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.
   If you are claiming as a Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.

2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.

3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office.

CSEF payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

Queries relating to CSEF eligibility and payments should be directed to the school.
CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF) APPLICATION FORM

School Name ____________________________________________________________________________________________

School REF ID __________________________________________________________________________________________

Parent/legal guardian details

Surname ________________________________________________________________________________________________

First name _____________________________________________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________________________________________________

Town/suburb ___________________________________________________________________________________________

State________ Postcode__________________________

Contact number _________________________________________________________________________________________

Centrelink pensioner concession OR Health care card number (CRN)

☐ ______ - _______ - _______ - _______ OR

☐ Foster parent* OR ☐ Veterans affairs pensioner

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Student details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s surname</th>
<th>Child’s first name</th>
<th>Student ID</th>
<th>Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)</th>
<th>Year level</th>
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I authorise the Department of Education and Training (DET) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry of my Centrelink customer details and concession card status in order to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHHS) to provide the results of that enquiry to DET.

I understand that:

• DHS will use information I have provided to DET to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DET personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.

• this consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.

• I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DHS and provide it to DET so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.

• if I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DET.

• Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and for State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You are able to request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child’s school.

Signature of applicant ___________________________________________ Date ___________/____/____

VICTORIA State Government
Dandenong Valley
My Time’ Parent Group

Provides support for mums, dads, grandparents and anyone caring for a child with a disability or chronic medical condition.

Parents and Carers can:

* Meet informally with others in similar circumstances
* A chance to relax, have a chat and enjoy a cuppa
* Hear from others and share ideas and experiences
* Find out about resources and services available to families
* Get extra parenting information and skills development

Venue:
Dandenong Valley SDS
19-21 Victoria Road
Narre Warren

Time:
Tuesdays 10 am - 1 pm (fortnightly)

Dates – Term 1
2nd February
16th February
1st March
15th March

For enquiries please call
Lynne Wood 0418 480 166
Coffee afternoons for parents who have a child with Down syndrome.

Come along and relax with a cuppa and chat with other parents.

Children welcome.

Taking place the first Wednesday of every month, except during school holidays. From 1.00 - 2.30pm

2016 dates:

3 February
2 March
13 April
4 May
1 June
13 July
3 August
7 September
5 October
2 November
7 December

Mentone Baptist Church
36 Harpley St Cheltenham
(Cnr Warrigal Rd and Harpley St)
Melway reference 87 B4

To RSVP or for more info, contact parent facilitator Valerie on 0409 850 191, or contact the MOIRA Parent Support Officer on 8552 2222/communitysupport@moira.org.au
We are a not for profit group based in the Casey/Cardinia area. We run sporting activities and camps for children with special needs, such as Autism, ADHD, Downs Syndrome, CP, or just kids that are struggling to fit in socially.

What ages?

We currently have participants aged 2 - 14

Who can attend?

Any children with special needs, their siblings are also welcome. A parent/carer must attend with the children. It is NOT a respite service.

Where?

Gym at Beaconhills College, Pakenham
Enter via Toomuc Valley Rd

Dates

We meet 1pm - 3pm
Saturday 6th February
Saturday 20th February
Saturday 5th March
Saturday 19th March

We are an inclusive group, so come down and have a try. We give children an opportunity to try different sports they may not otherwise be able to. They can participate and be themselves without fear of judgement or ridicule. We encourage parents to get involved.

No bookings required. Free event, just turn up!

For more information

call Doug 0439998520
sportismkids@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook
Sportism Kids